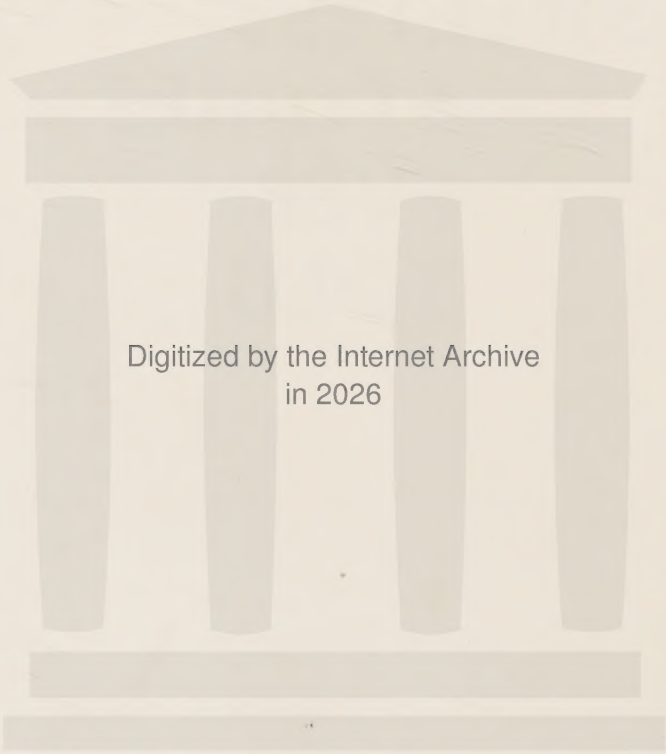
Sweetest Stories Ever Told

W. H. B. Miller

SWEETEST STORIES EVER TOLD



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by
W. H. B. MILLER

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THE LOVE CALL OF GOD

WHAT more delightful work could one be given than to sound God's love call and start the joy bells ringing in the hearts of little children? Although we may not possess the greatest talents, yet in this simple ministry to Christ's little ones what glorious possibilities are hidden!

Here are the men and women of tomorrow, standing on the threshold of a life that may be sweetened by our loving service today. A love-filled little heart may mean a Spirit-filled life, consecrated to the King's service, powerful in His great work of redemption. Children are around us, plentiful as flowers. They are looking our way. Shall we not, in the tender Shepherd's name, "suffer . . . them . . . to come unto" us? I sincerely trust that, through you, these short stories may accomplish their purpose to the Master's glory.

THE AUTHOR.

Of all the stories for boys and girls, the best are found in the Bible.

GALLOWAY

The Sweetest Story Ever Told

Story Text: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus."

DO YOU like to hear stories, boys and girls? I am sure that you do. Now I wonder what kind of stories you like best. Some children like fairy stories, and some like talks about birds and animals. Many of these are very beautiful.

But the sweetest stories ever told are to be found in the Bible, the dear old Book that God has given to us. And they are true stories, too, every one of them. That makes them better still. I am going to tell you some of these sweet old stories, because I know you will love them.

A long, long time ago, in a little town away over on the other side of the big sea, something very wonderful happened. This village was among the hills, and if you looked out on a clear, sunshiny morning you would see the blue mountains, pretty gardens, and lovely green pastures. If you could run over these green fields, you would find some of the prettiest flowers you ever saw, and you would see hundreds of bright birds and hear their sweet songs.

Well, in this small town one day a dear little baby

came. Its mother thought it was the sweetest little one that ever came into the world. She loved it very much and wished to give it everything that was good and beautiful. But the baby's mother was poor; she did not have any house for the baby to come to, any nice, soft bed to put baby in, or any beautiful clothes for it to wear.

The only place to be found in this little village was where the cattle and sheep were kept; and the only bed for the baby was a manger—a box where the food was put for the animals. So the mother laid her precious baby to sleep in the manger; and I am sure she watched it very lovingly and sang her sweetest songs to it.

I know that some of the children who are listening to this story have seen a baby like the one I have been telling you about, and perhaps you have at home a dear baby brother or sister; so you will be thinking that this is not a very wonderful story after all. But when I tell you that this baby was God's Son, and that His name was Jesus, and that He left His beautiful home in heaven to come to this world as a baby, I know you will think that it is indeed one of the sweetest stories you have ever heard. Jesus' home in heaven was more beautiful than I can tell you, and God, His Father, who loved Him so dearly, was there, and all the holy angels.

Then you will ask, Why did Jesus come to this world where there was no beautiful home waiting for Him, and only a manger to sleep in? It was because He loved you so much, and wished to tell you that God loved you, too. He wanted to take you someday

to His own beautiful home in heaven. And, besides this, He wanted to make you well when you are sick, to give you rest when you are tired, to make you happy, loving boys and girls.

Don't you think God was very kind to spare His Son from heaven to make us happy? And wasn't Jesus good to leave His beautiful home for us? I hope you will always love Jesus, because He did so much for you; and whenever you see a baby, don't forget that Jesus came from heaven just that way into the little town of Bethlehem.

Sometimes people go across the sea in big ships to visit this village where Jesus was born; someday you may see it. But if not, I hope you will be good children, so that you will surely see that beautiful home He left behind when He came to the world so long ago. And I want you to remember, too, that God sent Jesus to the world so that you would love Him and let Him be your Jesus, and that you would serve Him as your King. If you will do this, you will be God's little boys and girls.

I've heard a most wonderful story,
The sweetest that ever was told,
How Jesus left mansions of glory,
And rapture and gladness untold,
A Saviour to be,
To show you and me
The way to the city of gold.

REVIEW PICTURES

One night the shepherds near Bethlehem heard the angels tell about Jesus.

The Song of the Shining Angels

Story Text: "Glory to God in the highest."

YOU will remember that in my first story I told you how Jesus came to the world as a little baby, and that Mary, His mother, laid Him to sleep on the straw in a manger among the cattle, because she could not find any better place for Him. What a poor resting place that was for God's Son, who had left His beautiful home in heaven to be our Jesus!

Then you will remember that I told you about the beautiful green fields around Bethlehem, sprinkled with flowers of many bright colors. In these fields there were many of the pretty white sheep you love to see, eating the fresh grass and lying down in the cool shadows of the rocks and trees. And there were always shepherds who took care of the sheep—men wearing rough clothes made of skins, and bright-colored cloths around their heads.

The sheep loved these men, and when the shepherds wanted to take them to some place where there was more grass they would call their names, for every sheep had a name just as your dog or cat has, and the sheep would follow them. If they were a little way off,

the shepherds would perhaps blow a whistle, and the sheep would come running and jumping to answer the shepherds' call.

In the daytime this work was pleasant for these shepherd men, and they used to sit and talk in the shade while their sheep were quietly feeding on the green grass; and, sometimes, they would call the sheep together to see that none were lost. I shouldn't wonder if they talked sometimes about what all the people were longing for in those days—the coming of Christ to the world to be their King.

But when the sun went down and the stars began to shine, the shepherds would call their sheep around them, and sometimes in the winter they would build a big fire, because it was cold at night in that land; and then, if wild animals came to kill their sheep, the fire would frighten them away. Well, one night when they were watching their sheep and quietly talking together, the shepherds saw something that made them jump to their feet. And they were all very much afraid.

And what do you think they saw? Shining brighter than the twinkling stars was a glorious, bright angel, with a happy, shining face and beautiful white, flowing robes. In a moment he was standing beside them; and, although it was a dark night, the glory of the angel made everything as bright as day, and the shepherds could not look at him because the brightness was like the sun, and it hurt their eyes. I should not wonder if they covered their eyes with their rough cloaks, and stood there trembling with fear, wondering what was going to happen to them.

But very quickly the angel began to speak to them. And I know that great joy began to come into their hearts when they heard what the angel was saying.

Shall I tell you what the bright angel said to these shepherds? In the sweetest voice they had ever heard he said, "Don't be afraid, for I am going to tell you something wonderful and beautiful, that will give you and all the world great joy and happiness. A little baby named Jesus has just come into the world, and He is the great King that you have been waiting for so long. You will find Him in Bethlehem, wrapped in baby clothes, and sleeping in a manger."

When the angel had said this, the shepherds heard the sweetest music they had ever listened to, and when they looked up to the sky, they saw that hundreds of shining angels were flying around, singing with happy voices, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

The shepherds listened and watched until the music and the angels faded away in the distance and left the little stars shining as before. And when they looked to see the angel who had spoken to them, he was gone, too.

Then you may be sure they began to speak to one another, and to wonder why the beautiful angels gave them this sweet message. Then you can guess how they would leave someone to look after their sheep, and run quickly over the fields, up the steep hill to Bethlehem. And then I think they would look around anxiously and ask, "Where is the little Baby in the manger, that the angel told us about?"

Soon they found Him just where the angel said He would be, sleeping quietly in the straw, with Mary, His mother, beside Him. And, oh, how glad they were to know that Jesus had come into the world, and that this little Baby was really and truly God's Son, the King they had waited for so long! And we may well know that these men, with their rough coats and faces, leaned over the manger and looked lovingly at the dear little Baby that God had sent to be their Jesus.

Little children, the sweet message that the angels gave to the shepherds is God's message to you today. This should make you so happy and glad that you will feel like singing the angels' song, so that everyone will know what a kind, loving Jesus you have found.

Joy to the world, the angels sang;
Glory to God this day!
Jesus was born in Bethlehem,
And in a manger lay.

A Bright Messenger

Story Text: "We have seen His star."

WHEN you go outside at night, I am sure you wonder who put all the beautiful stars in the sky, and what makes them shine so brightly. Well, perhaps someday I may tell you about the stars that all little children love so much. Just now we are going to have a beautiful star story; but it will be about just one big, bright star that little folks saw shining many years ago at the time when the dear Baby Jesus was born.

You will remember how God sent the angels to tell the shepherds about Him, and how happy these men were when they found the little One sleeping in the manger.

Well, a long, long way from the town where Jesus was born, some good men who loved God were living. They must have believed that someday soon Jesus was going to come to this world from heaven to be a great King. And no doubt they used to talk about it to one another in the cool evenings as they sat on the tops of their houses or in their gardens, after the heat of the day.

BYRON DEBOLT, ARTIST

As the Wise Men followed the star to Bethlehem, they talked of the Saviour.

In those hot lands, the houses are made with flat tops. Wide steps lead up to the roofs where one can sit and enjoy the cool air and watch the lovely colors in the sky for a long time after the sun has set. In that land the sunsets are nearly always very beautiful. Sometimes you have seen in this country the pretty red and golden clouds in the evening, I am sure. How good God is to give us the beautiful skies and pretty flowers and fields to make us so happy!

One clear night when these good men were talking together as usual, and perhaps wondering when Jesus would come to the world, they saw something that filled them with joy and wonder. The sun had set, and all the little stars had begun to shine, and the purple hills and the green vineyards and the gardens were fading away in the darkness, and all the earth was still and sweet with the smell of flowers and fields. Suddenly one of the good wise men caught sight of a bright star, much larger than any he had ever seen before, shining over the hills. And I imagine I can see how surprised he was, and hear him say to the other Wise Men, "Just look at that beautiful new star! Whatever can it mean?"

These men used to watch the stars carefully every night. And you can see that a beautiful, big, new star like this one would make them think something wonderful had happened. And we know that they were right this time; for God sent this great new star, just as He sent the bright angels to tell the shepherds the sweet story, to let them know that the little Baby Jesus had just been born and to lead them to the place

where they could see Him and worship Him. So you can be sure these Wise Men made haste to find out if the star meant that Jesus, the great King, had really come to the world.

As they were rich men, they no doubt sent for their servants, and told them to get ready quickly for a long journey. And then the servants, I suppose, ran off and put the big saddles on the backs of the long-legged camels, and brought strange-looking baskets and bags made of the skins of animals. These they filled with food and water, enough to last the Wise Men on their long journey across the hot, sandy plains. And then they packed other parcels containing some beautiful presents to give to Jesus if they should find Him.

Then they started off, and every night the beautiful star told them which way to go. At last, after many days and nights, the star was so very bright that they knew they must be near the place where it was shining. Soon they saw the walls of a great city, and they thought they would go and ask the king if he knew about Jesus. They were very sorry to find that the king did not know anything about Him; and I suppose they began to wonder if they were going to find Jesus after all.

But someone soon told them that the dear old Bible said that Jesus, the great King, would be born in the little town of Bethlehem, not in that big city of Jerusalem. So they watched again that night for the bright star; and how pleased they were when they saw it! They hurried away with their camels and

servants to find Jesus, so that they could welcome Him to the world, and give Him their beautiful presents! After a while they came to the little town, and the big bright star was just over the very house where Jesus was; and you can understand how glad they were, and how they quickly got off their camels, and hurried to find the little Baby.

They found Him, the King that God had promised He would send, but He was just a dear little baby in His mother's arms! But oh, how happy they were, for they knew that they had really found Jesus! So they thanked God and worshiped Jesus, and gave Him the presents they had brought from their home, gold and sweet-smelling spices.

Would you like to give some presents to Jesus, my little friends? Well, you can give Him your hearts and lives, which He will like much better than the finest gold or sweetest spices; and just as God sent the bright star as a messenger to the Wise Men in order that they could find Jesus, so He wants you to be His bright little messengers to tell the other boys and girls about your loving Jesus and to show them where to find Him.

When Wise Men studied patiently
And longed the promised Christ to see,
God sent a star with message sweet
To cheer their hearts and guide their feet.
I'll be God's little star today
To tell of Christ, and show the way.

REVIEW PICTURES

When Jesus was twelve years old, He walked with His parents to Jerusalem.

The Silver Trumpets

Story Text: "They went up to Jerusalem."

WOULD you like me to tell you a story about something that happened when Jesus was a little boy? I know you would have loved to see His bright, smiling face; and if you could have played with Him, you would have found Him very kind and gentle, never speaking cross words or getting angry and stamping His feet as some boys and girls do. And when His father and mother asked Him to do anything for them, He would run quickly and be so glad to help them.

Mary and Joseph were pleased to see their little Boy growing up good and kind to them and to His brothers and sisters. So you see, children, you can be like Jesus, if you are kind and gentle, loving and patient.

The town where Jesus lived was a few days' walk from the big city of Jerusalem, and the people living in the country used to go up to worship God at the great and beautiful temple. All the little children loved to go up to Jerusalem and see the sun shining on the towers of gold and hear the priests blowing the silver trumpets.

One day the father and mother of Jesus told Him that there was soon going to be a great feast at the temple. They were going to take Him with them to Jerusalem, as He was twelve years of age, the time when all Jewish boys went up to the temple. You can be sure Jesus was very much pleased indeed.

So on a beautiful morning they left their home in Nazareth and joined the crowds of men and women and children who were joyfully marching along the roads toward the great city, some riding on asses or camels, others letting the animals carry their tents and food as they marched alongside.

Of course the little Boy Jesus was very happy that bright morning as He walked along the pretty roads and sometimes over the green fields and through the cool valleys, for He loved all the beautiful things that God had made—the flowers and the birds, the thick green trees, and the bright blue sky. Sometimes He saw flocks of sheep feeding or lying down in the green pasture with the shepherds watching close by, and I am sure He must have picked some of the flowers, the daisies and poppies and lilies. Perhaps you could have heard His sweet voice singing with the people as they waved the branches of trees and sang glad songs as they passed along.

Sometimes they would rest, when it grew hot, in the shade of the big trees or beside the little streams, and take cool drinks of the sparkling water, and thank God for all the beautiful things He had given them. At night they would lie down under tents or trees until the daylight came again.

Well, after two or three days' journey, they came near to Jerusalem and could see the great high walls of the city and the wonderful temple beyond. And when they saw it sparkling in the sunlight, all the people shouted for joy and waved their hands and green boughs over and over again. If we had been there we would have heard the joyful shouts of the people all over the hills and valleys.

There was not room in the city for the crowds of people, so they put up their tents in the fields close by the gates of the city. Some of them made little houses with the green branches of trees, and made them pretty with flowers. No doubt Jesus helped His father and mother, Joseph and Mary, put up their little shelter of green boughs in some quiet, cool place near the city.

Early in the morning the people were all awake and listening to hear the silver trumpets from the great temple. Then they flocked into the city through the big gates, and Jesus, for the first time in His life as a child, saw the beautiful white marble pillars and arches and heard the wonderful songs of praise. You can be sure that He liked this very much, and day after day, as He went with Mary and Joseph to the temple, He loved the beautiful place more and more.

In the spaces around the temple, the great teachers in their flowing robes were teaching the people out of the Bible. Soon Jesus began to ask them questions. At first they thought He was only an ordinary little boy; but they soon found out that He knew many things that they did not understand. Of course He

Joseph and Mary found Jesus talking to the great teachers in the temple.

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did, because, my little friends, He was the Son of God, even if He was only a young boy.

After about seven days the people all got ready to go home again, and in the great crowds Mary and Joseph did not notice that Jesus was not with His brothers and sisters. When they went back to look for Him, they found Him in the temple talking to the great teachers about the Bible, asking them many questions they could not answer and telling them many things they did not know. He loved to talk about God and His great love. When His father and mother found Him, He told them that, although He was only a young boy, He must soon begin to do the work that God had given Him to do. In other stories I must tell you some of the wonderful things He did as He grew older.

So, my little friends, I want you to remember that even if you are very young and small, you can begin now, as Jesus did, to work for God in some kind, loving way.

Although I'm but a little child,
My God I will obey;
I'll find some loving thing to do
For Jesus' sake today.

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When the servants filled the jars with water, Jesus changed it into wine.

Purple Grapes and Orange Blossoms

Story Text: "Thy love is better than wine.

IN THE country we have been talking about, boys and girls, people had their homes and gardens just as we do; but you would think that their houses were not at all like ours. There were no chairs to sit on or bedsteads with springs. And there were no wooden floors or nice glass windows such as we have. But since it was a land of flowers and trees and gardens, you can be sure they had pretty porches with creeping vines and sweet-smelling blossoms around their houses. Sometimes they planted grapevines by the walls and fences, and these would creep all over the buildings; and the little children loved to see the big bunches of ripe grapes hanging among the bright green leaves.

The grapes were very sweet and juicy in that good land, and the people used them for both food and drink. They pressed the juice out of the grapes, to make wine; and this red grape juice was used for cool drinks on very hot days. Someday when you have a nice bunch of grapes, you can make a little of this sweet wine for yourself; and I am sure you will like it very much.

Well, I want to tell you a little story today about Jesus, and how He made some good, sweet wine without any grapes at all. Mary, Jesus' mother, you know, and Jesus were loved by everyone, they were so kind and good. So when two of their young friends were going to be married and start a little home of their own, of course they wanted Mary and Jesus to be at the wedding. So we can imagine seeing Mary on a beautiful spring day, going from her home in Nazareth to a little town called Cana, just a few miles away. After walking through the fresh green fields, she would come to the house of her young friends, and would find it all bright and pretty with green leaves and flowers of all colors hanging from the doors and walls, and would hear the merry chatter and laughter of many other visitors who would be there to see the wedding. There Mary would meet Jesus, whom she had not seen for some time. I am sure their friends would be very pleased to see them.

Very soon Mary and Jesus and all of the other visitors would go to the upper room of the house, and there they would see the young man and his lovely young bride standing under a beautiful arch of flowers and green leaves, ready to be married. They would have crowns on their heads, and they would sometimes exchange crowns with each other. The man who married them would hand them cups of the wine I have been talking about, which they would drink. Then, when they were married, all present would drink a cup of wine and march around the man and his young wife, singing hymns; and then all would

drink more wine out of one of the large cups. At the feast which followed, wine was again used by all the guests. So you can see, my little friends, that in those days it would never do to run short of wine, because it had to be used so many times during the wedding, and it would be a disgrace if there were not enough.

At this wedding I am telling you about, I don't know how it happened,—perhaps there were more visitors than were expected,—but all of a sudden someone found out that there was no wine left. Mary heard the people talk about it and saw the anxious faces of her young friends when they heard the news; and she felt sorry, because she knew how troubled they were. How could she help them?

Suddenly she thought of Jesus, and she ran and told Him. Now we know, little boys and girls, that Jesus was always loving and kind and could not bear to see anyone in trouble; so He did a very wonderful thing which will show you that He was really the Son of God. There were some big empty jars standing by the door. The guests had used the water from these jars to wash their feet before going into the house; for in those days it was the custom always to enter a house with clean, bare feet. Well, Jesus saw these jars, and He told the servants to fill them again with water. I suppose the servants wondered why Jesus wanted the water after all the guests had washed their feet.

But Mary seemed to know that Jesus was going to do something wonderful, and she asked them to do just as Jesus said. So they quickly filled the

jars to the brim with water, and looked with wonder to see what Jesus would do next. But Jesus was always very quiet and humble, and never tried to make people think He was great. He quietly told the servants to draw out some of what was in the jars, and take it to the man who was looking after the feast.

And what do you think they found, my little friends? Why, Jesus had turned the water into good wine! This was a great surprise and joy to them all; and as they began to talk about the strange thing that Jesus had done, some would say, "This must be the Son of God, or He could not do such a wonderful work."

Well, my little friends, I want you to believe that Jesus *is* the Son of God, and also to remember that Jesus is your loving Friend, always ready and waiting to hear you and to help you when you are in need, just as He helped His young friends out of their trouble at the wedding feast.

I know that when I ask Him to,
My grief and pain He'll bear.
My Jesus, loving, tender, true,
Will always hear my prayer.

A Sick Little Boy

Story Text: "We would see Jesus."

I WANT to tell you a story today about a boy who lived long ago in a fine big house close beside a beautiful sea. It was in one of the cities of this good land that I have been telling you about in my other stories.

The boy's father was a ruler in the city and had many servants to wait on him. He also was in charge of many soldiers. I cannot tell you the boy's name, but I know that his father loved him very much, and I am sure that he would sometimes walk with him by the sea and watch him paddle in the cool water or throw white pebbles at the shining waves as they rolled in at his feet. This little boy loved the beautiful Sea of Galilee and never tired of looking at the white-sailed fishing boats that went out every day with their loads of gaily dressed fishermen. And what a pleasure it was to see them coming in at night with their baskets full of the pretty, bright-colored fish that are so plentiful in that beautiful sea!

Well, one day this beloved boy took sick, and when his father went to see him he was breathing quickly

and his head was burning hot. Of course the father felt very sorry about his boy, and did everything he could to make him better. But day after day the child grew worse, until the poor father felt sure that the son he loved so much was going to die. Oh, how sorry he felt! and I can imagine that he walked around in his big house, from one room to another, and big tears would roll down his face as he thought that he might lose his dear son. And I think I can see him standing by one of his big windows, and looking over the sea the boy loved so much, and thinking *so* hard what he could do to make him well.

Suddenly something came to his mind that made his face light up with hope and joy. Oh, if it could only be true! He had heard the people in the city talking about a man called Jesus, who was going through the towns in the country, healing all the sick and making the blind men see and the lame walk, and who was kind and loving to the little children. Some of the men in the city said that they didn't believe it, for no man could do such wonderful things; and I am afraid that this little boy's father felt the same way when he heard the other men talking about it. But now his son was sick, perhaps dying, and he felt he *must* do something to help him; and, perhaps, after all, this Jesus *could* cure him. And as he stood thinking about it, I imagine I hear him say, "I'll find this Jesus just as quickly as I possibly can, and bring Him right to my home; for I am really beginning to feel that He will cure my little son."

Then it seemed that God so pitied the man's

sorrow that He put faith into his heart, and he cried out with joy, "I'm *sure* He can do it! I'm *sure* He can do it!"

And then, little boys and girls, how he hurried downstairs to his servants and called to them to get the fastest horse ready for the journey! Then he ran inside the house to speak to the little boy, and I hear him saying, "Cheer up, my little boy! I'm going to find Jesus; and I'm sure He will make you well again." And then how he galloped away that early morning through the city streets, out into the country, along the dusty roads, past the fields and through villages, on, on, while the midday sun was shining hot. I don't think he even stopped to take a drink from the cool streams he passed over. He was thinking of only one thing: His little boy was dying, and he must quickly find Jesus and ask Him to come and cure him.

And Jesus, who knows everything, knew that this poor man with the sad heart was galloping along the hot roads to seek help for his child. In every little village the man came to I imagine I can hear him calling out: "Where is Jesus? I must find Jesus!"

And when the people saw he was a great man in the land, and heard that his little boy was dying, they would tell him which way to go so as to find Jesus quickly. Soon he heard that Jesus was at Cana, the village I have told you about; so you can be sure he forgot how tired he was with his long journey, and hurried off again, feeling every hour more sure that Jesus could cure his sick boy.

REVIEW PICTUR

When the centurion found Jesus, he asked Him to come and heal his little son.

Toward the close of the day he reached Cana and found that Jesus was really there. How pleased he was! He jumped off his horse and ran to the place where Jesus was. And as he stood before Jesus all hot and dusty and tired, he cried: "Jesus, my little son is dying; *do* come and heal him, for I love him so much."

And Jesus looked at the poor man in his great trouble, and was sorry for him; and He quickly told him not to be so troubled and afraid, because He would heal his dear little boy—He would not let him die.

Can you imagine the joy of the father when Jesus told him this good news? Although the man was a great ruler, I think he must have fallen down at Jesus' feet, and thanked Him over and over again for His kindness. He seemed to be sure that his little boy was all right; but he could not tell how any man could do such a wonderful thing without even coming to his house. But I think he must have heard in Cana that Jesus was the Son of God, and he must have heard about all the great things Jesus had been doing for the people.

The next day, after he had rested, he hurried home again, and the people in the house were watching for him; for, as he came near, his servants ran out to meet him, shouting the glad news as they ran, "Your little boy is better! Your little boy is better!" Oh, how glad they all were! Can't you see the father run to his little son and kiss him and tell him all about the kind and good Jesus who had made him well again?

My little friends, Jesus is still the loving Friend

of little children. He is *your* Jesus, who loves to help you and make you happy.

As we pass through the world with its sorrow and joy,
We will find many kind friends who please us;
But, as children of God, little girl, little boy,
The best Friend to have is Jesus.

A Little Ship in a Big Storm

Story Text: "Peace, be still."

HAVE you ever been down to the seabeach, children? How nice it is to watch the big waves rolling in, and to play with the shining sand and the pretty shells and seaweed, and to watch the lovely white birds floating by! Jesus made the blue sea, the sunny land, and all the wonderful things in them for His little children; and He is pleased when He sees that you are happy and that you love all these beautiful things.

There was once a little girl who felt that she had to say "Thank you" for all the pretty things she saw. One very warm day her mamma took her to the seaside; and as soon as she saw the lovely, shining water, and felt the sweet, cool breeze on her face, she said, "Thank You."

"Why, dear," her mamma said, "who are you saying 'Thank you' to?"

"To Jesus, mamma," the little girl answered, "because He has been so good to me."

I hope, my little friends, that *you* will thank Jesus every day for His many great kindnesses to you.

I could tell you a long story about the beautiful things He has given you; but you can see them every day, all around you, and I hope that you will never forget that every one of them comes from the loving hand of Jesus. To see the great, wide, dancing sea is indeed one of the best of our pleasures; and whenever you see the big ocean, I want you to think of a little story I am now going to tell you.

One day, long ago, Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, a beautiful lake that He loved very much. I am sure that many times He looked over its blue waters to the tall mountains beyond, and that, as He passed along, He spoke kindly to the little children who were playing with the sand and the shells on the beach.

There were a number of pretty little villages along the shores of the sea, where the fishermen lived in their humble homes. When the people found out that Jesus was passing by, they ran to see Him; for they had heard about the wonderful things He had done, and how helpful and loving He was. Perhaps He would see some little boy who was lame or blind and could not play around like the rest of the happy little children. This would make Him feel so sorry that He would touch the child and make him well, for Jesus was so kind that He could not pass by anyone who was in trouble.

The people heard how good Jesus was, and they began to carry out the sick people and the little children for Him to touch as He passed along. He gladly healed everyone that was brought to Him. You can be

sure that that was a happy day for hundreds of sick ones, and that the people began to follow Him; and some of the poor folks He had healed would be there among them. As with great joy they walked along the shores of the blue sea, they would tell everyone they met what wonderful things Jesus had done for them.

Soon Jesus came to a place where He could speak to the people, and He told them some beautiful stories. One was about a sower sowing the seed—a sweet lesson, one which they could never forget. The people all wanted to get close to Jesus to hear His loving words, and soon He could hardly move and had to get into a boat to speak to them as they stood and sat around on the shore. But some of the people were so anxious to hear every word that they jumped into their little boats, and got near to Him in that way.

How pretty everything must have looked that beautiful still evening as Jesus gave the people the words of life, and the great setting sun shone over the wide sea and touched the hills and trees with gold and crimson!

But soon His disciples could see that Jesus was getting tired, and they asked Him to let them sail the boat over to the other side of the sea, away from the people, so that He could get a rest. But Jesus kept on talking until it was almost dark; then, with kind words, He told the people to go to their homes.

The disciples loved their Master and were sorry to see Him tired, so they made a bed for Him at the end of the boat, and put a pillow under His head; and He quickly fell fast asleep. Then they

CHARLES ZINGARO, ARTIST

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Jesus slept during the storm; but when the disciples called Him, He saved them.

sailed out on the sea, and some of the little boats followed them for a long way, hoping to hear Jesus speak to them again; for they had never heard such beautiful words in all their lives. How thankful we should be, boys and girls, that God has put those beautiful things that Jesus said in the dear old Bible, so that we can hear them, too!

Well, when the disciples left the shore, with Jesus sleeping in the boat, it was a quiet, mild evening, and the stars were beginning to twinkle. But soon the wind began to blow, dark clouds floated over the sky, the waves dashed over the little boat, and a great storm arose. The disciples worked hard to keep the water out of the boat. They worked as quietly as they could, for they didn't want to wake the tired Jesus out of His sleep.

But the howling wind grew stronger and stronger, and the big waves began to fill the little boat with water; and just when the poor men really thought that they were sinking and would all be drowned, one of them called out in great distress, "Master, Master, we perish!"

Jesus was awake in a moment, and saw their danger and how afraid they were. And then a most wonderful thing happened, children. Jesus stood up, and looking at the terrible storm that was growing worse every minute, He raised His hand and said in the quiet voice that everyone loved, "Peace, be still!" Quickly the wind stopped blowing, and the sea was smooth and calm, and the stars began to twinkle again.

Then Jesus looked at the men who had been so

frightened and told them in His gentle, loving way that they should not be afraid, but should always believe that He was able and willing to save them out of all their troubles.

You may be sure, my little friends, that the disciples now knew that Jesus was the Son of God, for they said among themselves, "It is wonderful! even the winds and the waves obey His voice." But *we* know, boys and girls, that it was not very wonderful after all; for, you see, Jesus made the great sea, and the winds and the waves, so He was able to stop the great storm if He wished to. And Jesus made you, too, so, of course, He is able to keep you and to save you from every danger when you ask Him, and to make your lives sweet with His love and peace.

When the winds blew loud and shrill,
  And the waves in fury rushed,
Jesus spake: "Peace, peace, be still!"
  And the tempest roar was hushed.
So, when trouble fills my life,
Jesus' word will still the strife.

A Boy's Basket

Story Text: "Give us this day our daily bread."

JUST a few miles from where the old river Jordan runs into the Sea of Galilee that I have been telling you about, there used to be a pretty little town called Bethsaida. Have you ever seen a river, boys and girls? You know how the water flows along between green banks, and how the big trees hang their branches right over to the water's edge.

Perhaps, too, you have seen some of the cool, quiet spots where the tiny fish love to play, and where the swallows skim around, touching the water every now and then with their wings. Then, sometimes, you have seen the pretty waterfalls, where the water dashes over the rocks, sparkling in the bright sunlight as it leaps along. I am sure you would like to have a home by a beautiful river where you could watch it every day and bathe your feet in the cool water as it hurries by. Well, I am going to tell you a story today about a boy who lived somewhere near the river Jordan and not far from this old town of Bethsaida.

One day this boy's mother heard that not far away from her home a Man was telling the people beautiful

ROBERT AYERS, ARTIST

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Jesus blessed the boy's loaves and fishes, then fed the multitude with them.

stories, and doing many wonderful things—curing the deaf and blind, and healing the sick people that were brought to Him. She did not know who the Man was, but she saw many people going from the town into the country toward the place where they said He was teaching. Some were hurrying along with their children, and now and then came people helping some poor lame man or carrying someone who was too sick to walk.

I can see the little boy's mother standing at the door of her tiny house, watching the crowds go by, and wondering what this great Man was like, and thinking how much she would like to see Him, too. And, of course, her boy had been watching the people all day, and wishing that he could go with them. And then, toward evening, can't you hear him say, "Mother, please let me go; for there must be something very wonderful to see when so many people are going there!" Perhaps the boy's mother was poor, and maybe she told him that she would let him go and see if he could sell something to the people, who would be needing food after being away from their homes so long. The lad was much pleased when his mother told him that he could go, and he ran quickly to get his basket, into which his mother packed the food which she hoped he would be able to sell. And when he looked inside the basket, he saw that there were five little loaves of barley bread, and two small fishes from the river. Then he ran off quickly, and was very soon among the great crowds of people who were still hurrying by.

It was almost dark when he got home again. His mother saw him coming, and of course she wanted to know all about the people and the Man, and about the food her boy had sold. But the little fellow could hardly speak, because he had such wonderful things to tell his mother. I can hear him crying out, "Oh, mother, I have seen some wonderful things today!" And then he told her that very soon after he reached the place where the great Man, called Jesus, was speaking, some men came to him and bought his loaves and fishes, and told him to bring them along to where Jesus was standing, for He wanted to feed the people. "And, mother," the boy said, "He was going to feed thousands and thousands of men and women and little children with my five tiny loaves!

"The men told me to come quickly; and when I went to where Jesus was standing, the greatest thing happened that I have ever seen in all my life! Jesus spoke to me so kindly, and put His arm around me, mother; then He looked up to the sky, and asked God to bless my little loaves and fishes. And, oh, mother, what do you think happened then?"

And, my little friends, I know the boy told all the wonderful story—how Jesus lifted the loaves and fishes out of the little basket and gave them to His disciples to pass around to the people; and as soon as He took them out, more would come, so that the basket was never empty; and how He was able to feed five thousand men, besides many women and children, out of the basket that had only five loaves and two little fishes in it. And everyone had plenty to eat.

And then I think the lad said that another wonderful thing happened. Jesus wouldn't let them waste anything that was left over. So they gathered up twelve baskets full of scraps! Just think, boys and girls, how surprised that mother must have been! And I am sure the little boy would tell her how the people were crying out that this Jesus was the Son of God, and that He ought to be made a great king.

And I shouldn't wonder if the boy took great care of that basket, and perhaps, years after, would show it to his own children, and tell them over and over again this wonderful story about Jesus.

Don't you ever forget, little friends, that if Jesus could feed five thousand people with those tiny loaves and fishes, He can surely take care of you; and always think of this story when you pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," and be quite sure that Jesus will hear you and answer your prayer.

There were only five loaves and two fishes, they said;
But behold, what a wonder we see!
If Jesus can feed many thousands with these,
I *know* He can take care of me.

REVIEW PICTURE

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an ass, the people welcomed Him as King.

Glad Shouts of Little Children

Story Text: "Blessed is He that cometh."

I KNOW you will like to hear the story about Jesus that I am about to tell you. One day, when there was a great feast at the temple in Jerusalem, and crowds of people had gone there from all over the country, Jesus told His disciples that He was going, too. After He had walked a little way, and come near to the Mount of Olives, He sent two of the men into a village that they were passing, and told them that they would find an ass tied up at a certain place. Jesus wanted to use this ass to ride upon as He went up to the temple. He told the men that the one who owned the ass would let them borrow her when he knew that Jesus wanted her.

An ass, you know, is something like a horse, but smaller; and you may be wondering why the great King Jesus, the Son of God, was wishing to ride on a little animal in such a humble way. But in those old days, things were very different from what they are now. It was quite proper for a king to ride before the people on a white ass; and the Bible said that Jesus would come in this way.

So the men went into the village and found the ass, just as Jesus said they would; and the owner was quite willing to lend her to them, when they told the man about Jesus. Then the disciples put their coats on the ass's back, and Jesus sat there, and began to ride toward the city.

When the people found out that He was passing, they ran out to see Him, and when they saw that He was riding on an ass, the way kings rode in those days, they began to cry out, "Jesus is our King! Hosanna to the Son of David!" They threw their cloaks and coats on the road for Jesus to ride over, and they hurried around and cut branches from the trees, and spread them on the road, too; and they ran before Him and after Him as He rode along, waving green branches, and shouting loudly, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" And many of the blind and the lame and the sick whom Jesus had healed ran before Him shouting, "Hosanna!" And the little children, who also loved Jesus very much, got the nicest branches they could find, and picked pretty flowers and grasses, and threw them down in front of Jesus, and cried out over and over again in their sweet little voices, "Hosanna to Jesus our King!"

What a sight it was that beautiful spring day, to see hundreds of men, women, and children running down the green slopes of the Mount of Olives, and waving branches as they shouted out their praise to Jesus! I am sure, my little friends, you would have liked to be there, and you would have praised Him, too; for He was so kind and good to all the little chil-

dren. Don't forget, though, that when you are singing your sweet hymns in church or Sabbath school you are praising Jesus just as the little children did on that joyful day long ago.

As I told you, Jerusalem was full of people because of the great feast at the temple; and when they heard the joyful shouts of those over on the Mount of Olives, perhaps they thought that some very great man from one of the other cities—maybe a king from another country—was coming to their feast, and crowds began to run out of the temple and through the streets toward the city gates, crying, "Who is this coming? Who is this coming to the feast?" And someone answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth and Galilee!"

And the people at the temple, who had also heard of Jesus and loved Him, got big palm branches and waved them, and ran out to meet Him as He came near the city gates, crying with loud, happy voices, "Hosanna; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" And you can be sure all the people of the big city were moved when they heard the shouting, and ran to their doors and windows to see who the great king was that the people were so glad about.

When they saw that it was our loving Jesus, the Friend of the little children, they also waved *their* hands and cried out, "Hosanna!" What a wonderful day that was in old Jerusalem!

But the priests in the temple did not like to hear the people call Jesus their King, and they tried to stop the shouting and the praising. But they could not.

Little children, Jesus is your loving King, so bring to Him your very best gift, which is your precious little life, and sing glad praises to Him with all your heart.

Come, children, lift your hearts and sing
A joyful, glad refrain;
For Jesus, as your glorious King,
Is coming soon again.

A Hungry Boy

Story Text: "I will arise and go to my father."

LONG ago, before Jesus came to the world as a little Baby, the people were afraid of God, because they had been taught that He was very hard and unkind and severe. The priests in the temple and the old teachers used to make the people serve and worship God because they feared Him. We know that God is not cross and unkind. He is kind to us, and He loves us better than even our dear fathers and mothers do. And one reason that Jesus came into the world was to tell us that God loves us and cares for us, and wants us to love Him, and to live with Him by and by in the beautiful home in the wonderful new earth He will prepare for His children. So He sent His Son, Jesus, to tell us all about it. You will also remember that Jesus came into the world as a Baby, and grew up to be a Boy like you, among other boys and girls, and before long He began to tell the people some stories to show them that God loved them and wanted them to be His children. Would you like to hear one of the beautiful stories?

On the day He told this story that I am going to

tell you, the people were all crowding around Him, wanting to hear His wonderful words. Jesus knew that they were afraid of God and did not know what a kind, loving Father He is, so He thought He would tell them a story so that they would love God and not be afraid of Him any more. And some of the teachers who made the people afraid of God were there; Jesus wanted them to hear His beautiful story.

Oh, I *do* wish you could have heard Jesus telling this story! I am sure His face was shining with joy and gladness as He talked about the great kindness of God, His dear Father, who so loved the world that He sent Him to be our Jesus.

This wonderful story was about a father who had two boys, and one was a very naughty boy, as you will see. He went to his father one day and told him that he was going away from home; and he asked for all the money that would belong to him when his father died. I am sure this made his father feel sorry indeed, for he loved his boy dearly. But he gave him the money he asked for, and then the bad boy went away from his home into a far country. I imagine I can see the poor father standing at his door and crying as he watched the lad out of sight. But away the young lad went over the fields, and I don't think he ever looked back to see if his father was standing there. Don't you think the father would be very, very angry with him, and would he not call out and tell him never to come home again, and that he would punish him if he did come back? Some fathers would, I know; but, you see, Jesus meant us to under-

stand that this father He was talking about was God; and I want you to see how good and kind and forgiving he was to the poor boy. Then you can be sure God will be just as good and kind to you.

Well, the story goes on to say that this bad boy spent all his money in many foolish, wicked ways, and seemed to forget all about the kind old father who loved him so much. The father was watching for him every day, I am sure, and longed to see his boy again.

After a long, long time, when the boy's money was all gone, there came a famine in the land, and he became so poor that he was glad to find some work in the fields herding pigs; and he was so hungry he would have been glad to eat the same food that the pigs ate.

Then he began to think about the nice home he had left, and how good his father was, and what a happy time he had had when he was at home. I can see him sitting on the ground, watching the pigs and thinking what a bad boy he had been; and then I suppose he began to wonder why he had left his good home, and if his father would ever forgive him for being so unkind and so wicked.

"No," he thought, "I can never go back again, for father would be so angry he would drive me from the house."

But the poor fellow was so hungry and tired that he began to think that he *must* go back, if only to see the place where he had been so happy. Day after day he longed for his old home, until one day he could not stand it any longer, and he jumped up and cried out, "I *will* go home; and I will tell father that, although

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When the lost son returned home, his father received him with open arms.

I am not fit to be his son, I will be his servant, if he will let me."

And then, I imagine that as soon as he had made up his mind to return to his father, he quickly left the pigs in the field and began to run, he was so anxious to get back home again.

But when, after many days, he came in sight of the dear old home, he was afraid to meet his father, and stopped and thought that, after all, he had better go back and feed the pigs. Oh, how sad he felt when he saw the dear old place where he had been so happy, which, he was certain, could never be his home again!

But look! what is that he sees in the distance? Surely that is his father! and, see, he is waving to him; and, yes, he is even running to meet him, and calling out, "Welcome home, my dear boy, welcome home!" And before the boy can say a word, the good old father puts his arms around his neck and kisses him over and over again.

The boy tries to tell him how sorry he is, but the father is so glad to see him, and so happy to have him home again, that he cannot listen to that, but says, with great gladness, over and over again, "My boy's come home!"

Then he tells his servants to give the poor, ragged boy the best clothes, to put shoes on his feet and a ring on his hand, and to prepare a great feast. He has found his boy! And he calls in all his friends to rejoice with him, and what a happy time they have together! I am sure the poor boy will never want to leave his good home and kind father again.

Now, boys and girls, I hope you can see in this little story Jesus told long ago that God is kinder than anyone in the world. He wants you to love Him and trust Him, and to make up your mind that *you* will never leave the Father's home and the Father's loving care.

I love my dear home, my beautiful home,
That Jesus has gone to prepare;
The angels will sing, and their glad harps will ring,
When my kind Father welcomes me there.

The Poor Blind Men

Story Text: "Now I see."

ONE of the sweetest stories I can tell you today, boys and girls, is about the poor blind men who came to Jesus and asked Him to heal their eyes so that they could see. Have you ever seen a blind man walking along the street, beating his stick on the ground, or following a dog that was leading him through the crowds of people? How careful he had to be not to fall over something or walk into a wall or building! God loves blind men, and Jesus was always glad to make them see. I am sure you will always be kind to them, too, and do what you can to make them happy. How good it is to be able to see the beautiful flowers, the blue sky, and all the other pleasant things that God has put in this big world!

How much nicer the apples and peaches taste when we see how rosy they are! And how good it is to see the sun rising in the morning, and the little birds flying among the big trees, singing because the sun is shining again! When the day is past, and evening comes, and the sun sets over the hills, the sky is bright with the beautiful red, shining clouds. Then,

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When the blind man called on Jesus for help, Jesus stopped and healed him.

in a little while, we may see the big silver moon rising, and the bright stars twinkling all over the sky. How good God is to give us our eyes, so that we can see all these beautiful things! How dark it is, both day and night, to blind people!

As you know, Jesus made all these beautiful things for our happiness, and He was so sorry to know, when He was in the world, that the blind could not see them, that He was always ready to open their eyes and make them see.

One day, when Jesus was walking along the road, He heard someone calling Him. So He stopped and found that two blind men were sitting by the roadside. Someone must have told them that Jesus was passing by, for they cried out, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Thou Son of David!" The people who were following Jesus tried to stop their cries, but they called out still louder, "Jesus, Jesus, help us!" So Jesus called them to Him in His loving way.

"What do you want Me for?" He asked.

"Oh, Jesus," they replied, "do open our eyes, so that we can see."

And Jesus was so sorry when He saw how helpless they were that I am sure He said many kind, loving words to them, which they would remember as long as they lived. And then, He just touched their sightless eyes, and a most wonderful thing happened. In a moment the blindness was gone. Can't you hear their happy cries and see them dancing for joy, as they called out, "Oh, Jesus, we can see! we can see!" The people crowded around them and looked at their

eyes, and asked them over and over if they could really and truly see. And the men pointed to the things around them, in their gladness to show that they were blind no more.

Oh, what a happy day it was for these poor blind men! No wonder they followed Jesus all day, telling the people, as they passed along, what a wonderful thing He had done for them.

These men must have had some place they called home, and I imagine I can see them going home, not slowly moving along with sticks in their hands, but running with all their might, and crying out as they ran, "We can see! We can see! Jesus gave us our sight!" And if they had little children, I am sure they took them on their knees and told them over and over how good and loving Jesus was; and I know that the children loved Jesus because He had been kind to their fathers.

I hope, boys and girls, that you will love Jesus, too, because He is just as kind today as He was then, and He always hears us when we ask Him to help us.

Sometime after this Jesus saw another blind man. This one had been blind all his life. You can be sure Jesus spoke to him and told him how sorry He was; then He put some clay on the man's eyes and told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam.

No doubt the man had sometimes heard about Jesus and felt sure that when Jesus touched his eyes he would see. Don't you suppose he begged someone to take him to the pool as quickly as possible, and that he kept saying to the men who were leading him,

"I'm going to see! I'm sure I'm going to see, for Jesus touched my eyes"? And then, when he came to the pool, he stooped down and washed as Jesus told him to do. And then, oh, what joy for the poor blind man! His eyes were opened, and he could see. There was the pretty pool of Siloam, the blue sky, and all the people standing around. Oh, how glad he was!

The man shouted out in his great joy, and he wanted to run and find Jesus so he could thank Him. But the people crowded around him and looked into his eyes and asked him over and over again if he could see *them*. And I think some of the people ran off quickly and told the man's father and mother what a wonderful thing Jesus had done for their son; and you can be sure that the parents were made happy because their son's blindness was gone.

So, my little friends, you can see that Jesus always loved to help the men and women who were blind or sick, and to make people happy. You will be the happiest children in the world if you will be like Jesus, always trying to help those who are in trouble. I hope you will be kind to blind men whenever you see them, and that you will try to put some of the light Jesus has given you into their dark lives.

God gave me my eyes that I might see
  This beautiful world so sweet;
And I will His bright little messenger be,
  And lead the blind to His feet.

CHARLES ZINGARO, ARTIST

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In the church the man called out loudly at Jesus, but Jesus healed him.

A Wonderful Evening

Story Text: "He healed them all."

JESUS was so kind to everyone that the people loved Him, and the little children crowded around Him whenever He passed by their homes or stopped in their villages. No matter how weary, He was never too tired to say a kind word to them, to help those who were in trouble, or to heal those who were sick. In the land where Jesus lived, the sun shone hot, and in the middle of the day everyone tried to find cool places beneath the green olive trees or in their garden. And I am sure the children used to love to paddle in the cooling streams that were found in plenty in that land. It was very hard for sick people on those hot days; how they longed for the cool evenings!

Well, one Sabbath day in Capernaum, the big city near the lovely Sea of Galilee that I have told you about, the people heard that Jesus was there, for He had been to church that day and had healed a man who had a wicked spirit. I suppose all the people in the city had seen this poor man many times, had heard him cry out, and had seen him stumbling along the streets waving his arms and staring at everyone.

Somehow he found his way into the church that Sabbath when Jesus was present. He began to call out loudly and to ask Jesus who He was and why He was there. No doubt the people tried to keep him quiet, and perhaps some wanted to put him out of the meeting and take him away from the place and punish him; but the loving eyes of Jesus saw that he was in great trouble. Jesus knew how much he needed help and love, for no one seemed to pity him. Jesus was sorry for him and loved him, and He told the wicked spirit to come out of him at once; and the man was healed as soon as Jesus spoke.

During the afternoon the whole city was talking about this wonderful thing that Jesus had done. Even the people in the country outside of the city heard about it and said that such a strange thing had never happened before. "Just think of it," they said, "this Jesus must be a wonderful man, for even the wicked spirits hear His voice and obey Him."

The sick folks living in the houses soon heard what the people were saying about the marvelous thing that Jesus had done. I imagine I can see their eager faces and hear many of them asking over and over again just what Jesus said to the man, and how He healed him. And every minute they would get more faith that Jesus could heal them, too, if they could only see Him and ask Him. And then they would say with such pitiful voices, "*Do* take me to Jesus; I'm *sure* He will heal me when I ask Him!"

So when the sun had set in the west, and the cool evening had come, can't you see the people hurrying

into the city along the country roads? Here is a group of men and women in gaily colored garments just coming out of a little cottage by the road.

Let us come closer and see what they are doing. Ah, they are carrying on a stretcher a poor old man with a white face, looking thin and ill. But his eyes are shining with great joy, for he believes that Jesus is going to heal him.

And here is another group helping a cripple along; and see, there comes a mother with her sick baby in her arms. You can tell by her face how weary and anxious she is about her little one; but she whispers to the child as she hurries, "Jesus will heal you, my baby; I *know* He will!"

Here come some blind men, helping each other along, and asking the way into the city. "Where is Jesus of Nazareth?" they cry. "Oh, help us to find Him!" Ah, I notice some kind children are telling the men which way to go.

My dear little friends, don't forget that there are many people now in the world who want to find Jesus; and He will be pleased if *you* will show them the way. Just tell them how kind your Jesus is, and that you are *sure* He will help them if they are sick or in trouble.

And what did Jesus do when He saw them bringing so many sick people to Him? The Bible says He "healed them all." Just think of it, children, the poor old man, the little sick baby, the blind, the lame—there must have been hundreds of them, and Jesus healed every one!

Oh, what happy homes there were that night! And I suppose the people sat and talked for a long time about the loving Jesus, what He said to them, and what wonderful things He had done. Many would remember Him and thank Him for His kindness as long as they lived!

I hope that you will be really thankful that God so loved the world that He gave His only Son to be *your* precious Jesus, and that you will never forget, no matter how old you may grow, that He will always hear you and help you when you are in trouble.

Just like my Jesus I long to be,
Loving and sweet and kind;
I will speak gently whenever I see
The poor and the sick and the blind.

Sparrows and Lilies

Story Text: "Consider the lilies how they grow."

ALL over this great earth of ours, among the hills and in the valleys, wherever we go, we can find happy little birds building their nests and singing their sweet songs of praise to God, who has given them such a beautiful world to live in. We must always be kind to these songsters, for God gave them their lives and loves them very much. He has filled the earth with good things for them to eat, and He guides them over the meadows to the gardens and streams, where they can find food for themselves and their little ones.

Have you ever seen a mother bird feeding her babies? I remember that when I was a little boy, living at the old farm, the pretty swallows used to build their nests in the sheds. Sometimes, when the mother bird was away, I would climb up and feel the tiny warm eggs among the soft feathers that the birds had gathered to make their home cozy. Then, after a while, when the bright-eyed babies were hatched, I loved to watch the mother and the father bird flying home with food for their little ones, and then hastening off again for more. And I could tell by the happy

God, who makes the lily beautiful, has promised to care for His people, too.

DEVAN

sounds from the babies in the nest that the father and mother always found something good for them to eat.

Have you ever thought, boys and girls, about who gives you so many nice things for food? or who gave you the kind, loving father and mother who found such a good breakfast for you this morning? I am sure you know that it is the good Father above, and I hope you will always be truly thankful to Him.

In this land of ours there is nearly always something for us to eat when we are hungry; but in some parts of the world food is scarce, and it is very hard for fathers and mothers to find enough to feed their boys and girls. But Jesus, who loves the birds so much, tells us in the Bible that He loves His children much more and will surely care for them.

One day, when He was speaking to the people on a green hillside sprinkled with bright flowers, He taught them a beautiful lesson about the birds and flowers. Some of the people who were listening to Him were very poor, and were perhaps wondering how they would feed and clothe themselves and their children. Jesus knew what they were thinking about, and He was so kind that He wanted to comfort them.

Just then some birds, called ravens, were flying over the fields near where Jesus was standing. When He saw them coming He said, "Just look at those birds flying in the air. They don't plow the ground or sow the seed, or gather in the grain, yet God gives them their food." And then He stooped down and picked one of the pretty red flowers that were growing at His feet, and held it up so that the people could

look at it. Of course they all wondered what He was going to say.

"Look at this lily," He said. "What beautiful clothes it has on! It has never worked or worried about what it was going to wear, and yet it is dressed better than the greatest king who ever lived."

Then, in His loving way, He told them that they need not worry about their food and what clothes they would put on; for, if the great and good God, their loving Father in heaven, was so kind to the birds and the flowers, surely He would take care of His own dear children.

Well, boys and girls, I feel sure that when Jesus told them this story, the people felt very happy, and I hope *you* will never forget the beautiful lesson. Whenever you see a pretty flower or a little bird, always remember that God is caring for you just as He cares for them. Have you ever seen the sparrows flying around in your yards and gardens? What happy little fellows they are! They are to be found nearly all over the world; we could not count them, there are so many. But although they are so common and no one cares much for them, we know God loves them, for Jesus told the people one day that God notices when a tiny sparrow gets hurt or loses its life. And then Jesus told them again that our kind Father in heaven thinks a great deal more of us than He does of the sparrows; so you see we need never fear that He will forget us.

Why, as I have told you in other stories, Jesus left His beautiful home in heaven and came to our

world as a baby, so that He could be your Jesus and take care of you wherever you are. I am sure that you want to be God's own dear children, boys and girls. Then you must be like those pretty flowers that Jesus loved so much—sweet and pure and true; and you must be like the birds He spoke about—always cheerful and loving. And you must be willing and kind.

And as the little birds are always singing their songs of praise, don't you forget to thank God every day for the beautiful world He has made for you, and for all the good things He has given you to make you glad and happy.

When the winter storms are over
And the sunshine follows rain,
When the flowers their heads uncover,
And the fields are rich with grain,
Then the birds with happy voices,
Sing their songs of praise again.

STANDARD PUB. CO.

Mothers brought their children to Jesus for a blessing, and He welcomed them.

The Little Children's Friend

Story Text: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

IN THE early morning of a bright spring day, the sun was just peeking over the hills, warming up the new spring flowers opening to the daylight, and touching the young fields of corn with its golden rays. In the gardens, the fruit trees were putting forth their new green leaves and tiny buds. The birds were building their nests in the wayside trees, and their cheerful morning songs could be heard from their homes among the trees. The mothers in the little white houses scattered here and there over the countryside were up and doing, their doors and windows open to the morning breeze, letting in the sunshine and the sweet perfume from the scented gardens.

On this beautiful morning many a mother's eye was turned toward the road, with loving, anxious care; for was not Jesus, their loving Master, coming that way today? And were they not going out to see Him? He had been passing through other villages, healing the sick, talking kindly to the people, and helping them in every way He could; and today He would be passing

along the road through *their* village. So they quickly got their pitchers and ran down to the well to fill them with water for breakfast and the day's supply, for they would have to get off early.

They were going to take their children with them today; for they wanted Jesus to put His hand on the children's heads and bless them. In that country mothers liked to have some good teacher put his hand on the heads of their children and tell them to be good girls and boys. So it was a wonderful thing, indeed, to have Jesus, the greatest Teacher of all, put His hand on the heads of their little ones and bless them.

When breakfast was over and the house was put in order, the village mothers called the children in from play, washed them, and put bright-colored garments on the girls and boys; then, taking their babies in their arms,—for the babies were going too,—they set off happily from their homes.

The road was dusty and the sun was getting hot when they at last reached the place where Jesus was resting under the shade of a tree. All around Him was a great crowd of people, and the sick and helpless were waiting for Jesus to heal them. By the time the mothers came up to the crowd they were very hot and tired, for they had walked a long way in the dust of the road, carrying their babies. When the people saw these bright-faced, happy women coming with their boys and girls, they made way for them, so that they could reach Jesus; but when the disciples saw them drawing near, they were angry and told them Jesus did not have time to give to children.

So the mothers, full of sorrow, were turning away to take their little ones back home over the hot, dusty road. The little children were sorry; for, of course, their mothers had told them about how kind and loving Jesus was, and that He was so good to children. But when Jesus saw them turning away with drooping heads and with tears in their eyes, He cried out, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God;" and when the mothers heard Jesus say that, you can be sure they turned around gladly with smiles on their sweet faces, and the little children let go their mothers' dresses and ran quickly up to Jesus, crowding around Him in their happy way.

Jesus held out His arms for the babies, and He put His hands on the heads of the older ones, and said many kind, loving words to them. The mothers stood by with great gladness in their hearts because they had found Jesus and because He had blessed their little ones.

You, too, boys and girls, have been brought by your mothers to Jesus; and, though you may not see Him or feel His hands on your heads as these boys and girls of olden times did, you may know that He blesses you, too. Every time mother prays with you, she is bringing you to Jesus; and Jesus hears and answers mother's prayers, and helps to make you good and kind. And the loving Jesus is saying now, as He did to the mothers in that old-time village so long ago: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

So, dear little friends, come to Jesus today; give

your young hearts and lives to Him, and He will surely bless you and make you the happiest little children in all the world.

Listen to the voice of Jesus,
Sweet and kind and true,
"Come, My little child, I love you,
I will bless you too."

The Voice of Jesus

Story Text: "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice."

MANY of you children have seen a funeral passing along the street to the graveyard where the dead body of somebody's loved one is going to be laid to rest until Jesus comes. This is the saddest part of life, for it is so hard to say good-by to those who are dear to us.

I want to tell you another story today about Jesus. You know that He was always ready and willing to help anyone who was in trouble, and that many times when people were dying He healed their sickness and made them well again. But the sweet story I am now going to tell you is more wonderful still; for it shows that Jesus is able even to make the dead live again. Because Jesus has this power, we know that our loved ones who have been laid in their graves will live again. What a happy day that will be, when Jesus comes to the world the second time, and the graves are all opened, and we meet our dear friends once more! There will be no more good-bys after that, for we shall live forever among the "green fields of Eden," in the dear, dear home that

Jesus has gone to get ready for all those who love Him. Then we shall hear the angels sing, and see Jesus in the beautiful city of gold. I want you all to be there, so that your happy voices will join in the angels' songs around God's throne in heaven, and so that you will enjoy the beautiful green fields and never-fading flowers of the dear homeland.

As I have told you many times before, Jesus left His beautiful home, came to this world, and died on the cross, that we might live in heaven. So you see, children, we need not be afraid to die, for Jesus will surely make us live again some glad day.

Now for our story: Jesus had a friend called Lazarus, who lived with his two sisters, Mary and Martha, in the little village of Bethany. Jesus loved Lazarus and his sisters very much indeed, and used to go to their pretty home sometimes when He was sad and weary. They were always glad when they saw Him coming, and they had Him sit down and rest in the nicest place they could find, and gave Him food and drink, and did everything they could think of to make Him comfortable.

Wouldn't it be good, children, if Jesus would come to your house? I am sure you would want to be kind to Him, too. Well, He has told us in the Bible that if we are good to those who are in need of help, it is the same as being kind to Him. So, you see, perhaps He does come to our houses sometimes, after all; and always remember that you are being kind to Jesus when you help anyone who is in trouble.

Once Jesus had to say good-by to His friends in

Bethany and go a long way from the city, because the wicked men there were getting very angry and wanted to kill Him. Jesus with His disciples had walked many miles in the wind and rain, so that He could be kind to the sick people in another part of the country, where they would be glad to listen to His loving words.

But one day a man came in great haste from Bethany to the little town where Jesus was teaching and told Him that His friend Lazarus was very sick. Jesus was sorry to hear this, because He knew how sad the little home in Bethany would be, so He sent a kind message back to the sisters by the man who had brought the sad news. A day or two after that Jesus knew that Lazarus had died. He then told His disciples that He must go back to Bethany, for He had a great work to do there.

The disciples did not want Jesus to return to that place, because they were afraid the wicked men in the city would kill Him; and it was such a long, long way to Bethany. But Jesus was so kind and good that He could not leave His friends in trouble. So the disciples said they would go with Him, and die, too, if need be. They started off on the long journey, and after several days they came near Bethany. Martha ran out weeping to meet Jesus and told Him that her brother Lazarus had been dead for four days, and that they had buried him in a cave in their garden and had put a great stone in front of the grave.

Later Mary came and met Him, and she was crying; and many people who had come to visit Mary and

CAMERA CLI

Jesus called Lazarus to rise from the grave, and Lazarus came to life again.

Martha were also weeping because Lazarus was dead.

Jesus asked them to show Him where Lazarus was buried. Then they took Him to the cave in the garden, and all the people followed to see what He would do. When Jesus saw their great grief, He cried, too. He told them to move away the great stone that was at the door of the cave; and when they had done so, He asked God to hear Him and to let all the people see that He was the Son of God. Then He cried out with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth!" And in a moment Lazarus was alive again and walked out of the tomb with the white garment on that had been wrapped around him when he died.

Oh, the joy of Martha and Mary as they rushed to their brother, threw their arms around him, and kissed him over and over again; and don't you wonder what loving words Lazarus said to Jesus when he took Him by the hand and looked into His kind face?

Many of the people who saw this wonderful thing that Jesus had done, believed that He was really the Son of God. I am sure that you, my little friends, believe on Him, too, and know that when you die He will raise you up again at the last day and will give you a life that never ends, if you will be His loving children now.

Jesus left His home on high,
  Life and love for me to gain;
And I know that when I die
  He will raise me up again.

CAMERA CLIX

Jesus died on the cross to show His love for all mankind.

The Saddest Story Ever Told

Story Text: "He is . . . a man of sorrows."

IT IS indeed a sad story that I am going to tell you today, and yet it is truly one of the sweetest stories ever told, because it shows us the greatest love the world has ever seen. When Jesus was so kind to everyone,—healing the sick, curing the blind, blessing the children, and even raising the dead to life,—you would think that everyone in all the land would love Him, wouldn't you?

Many of the people and the children everywhere did love Him, but I am sorry to say that there were some wicked men who hated Him just because He was loved so much. These wicked men didn't like for the people to think so much of Jesus, because *they* were the great teachers. They were afraid the people would learn to love Jesus and hear such beautiful lessons from His lips that they wouldn't listen to anyone else any more. As they thought about it day by day and told one another about the crowds that were following Jesus to hear His words, they became more and more angry. At last they made up their minds to kill Jesus.

They sent soldiers to help take Him at nighttime, so that the people would not see the wicked thing they were doing. It was about midnight, when Jesus was praying in a garden on the Mount of Olives, that the priests and soldiers took Him roughly, tied His hands with cruel cords, and hurried Him away to a room near the temple. Here all the wicked priests were gathered together, and they treated Jesus most unkindly and struck Him on the face and jeered at Him. Oh, what an awful thing to do to the dear Son of God! After they had asked Jesus many questions, and tried hard to prove that He had done or said something wrong, the wicked men said He must die because He claimed to be the Son of God.

They mocked Him, and even spit in His face, and covered His eyes so He could not see, and cruelly struck Him on the face over and over, and laughed at His pain and sorrow.

Jesus could have called mighty angels from heaven to destroy these wicked men and protect Himself, but He quietly endured it all and did not get angry or try to save Himself. And He bore all this pain and sorrow for you, boys and girls, so that you might have life and gladness. I cannot tell you all the shameful things they did to Jesus that dark night. Some of them are too dreadful to think about.

When morning came, these cruel men took Jesus before Pilate, the Roman governor; then they took Him to Herod, king of the land, and told him many things that were not true. They wanted to kill Jesus, but they did not dare to do it unless these men said

they could. The king was wicked, too, for he let his soldiers put one of his old purple robes on Jesus; then he mocked Him and laughed at Him.

After this Jesus was taken back to Pilate, and none of the Roman rulers could find that He had done anything wrong; and, really, they did not want such a good Man to be killed. But the wicked priests kept crying out so loudly, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" that finally Pilate allowed Him to be beaten on His bare back and head with cruel whips, until the blood trickled down His poor, weary body. Then they put a crown of sharp thorns on His head, and pressed it down hard, and hit Him on the head, and did every cruel thing they could think of to the loving Jesus who never did one unkind thing in all of His life.

Finally they nailed Him on the cruel cross, and He died for you and for me, boys and girls. I cannot tell you just how He was crucified and how He suffered, for it is too sad and terrible to think about. I only want to tell you enough of the sad, sad story so that you will never forget the wonderful love of Jesus, and will make up your minds to serve Him always. We know that Jesus could have saved Himself if He had wished, but He gladly died that we might live.

Jesus was so kind and loving that even when He was dying on the cross He forgave the cruel men who had nailed Him there. He prayed to God, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Even while the hot sun was shining down on His wounded body, and the kindest heart that ever beat was breaking with sorrow, He remembered His dear mother.

Surely, children, we must do something for the precious Jesus who suffered so much for us. Let us, in His name, be kind and gentle; and let us, for His dear sake, gladly forgive those who are unkind to us.

The sad, sad story of the cross
Is sweet with love divine,
For Jesus gladly suffered loss
To make heaven's glory mine.

The Greatest Story Ever Told

Story Text: "He is risen."

WELL, boys and girls, I want to tell you one more story, which will, I am sure, make you very happy indeed. When Jesus died on the cross, a good man called Joseph asked Pilate if he might have the body of Jesus, as he wanted to bury Him in his own new tomb in a beautiful garden near where Jesus was crucified.

So when Pilate found out that Jesus was really dead, he told Joseph he could have the body if he wished. Joseph took the wounded, bloodstained body down from the cross and wrapped it in white linen with sweet-smelling spices. Then he laid it in the tomb, which was cut out of the rock among the trees and shrubs, and he rolled a great stone against the entrance.

Now you may think that this is the end of my story; for was not Jesus dead and buried? Yes, He was dead and buried, and Pilate sent soldiers to guard the tomb and make it very safe, so no one could steal the body. But the most glorious thing this world has ever seen was about to take place. Jesus was the Son

REVIEW PICTURES

Mary Magdalene was filled with joy to see Jesus alive again.

of God, you know, the One who had life and gave life. And, although He knew He was going to die for us, He had told His friends that He would rise again on the third day; for no tomb was strong enough to hold Him, and no stone great enough or heavy enough to prevent Him from coming forth again.

So, early in the morning of the third day, while the soldiers were carefully watching, God sent a shining angel to roll the stone away from the tomb. His face was as bright as the sun, and his clothes were white and shining, and the soldiers were so afraid that they fell to the ground on their faces; and when they got up again, the angel had left, and the grave was empty. Jesus had risen from the dead! The loving Friend of little children was alive again! Oh, what joy for the friends who loved Him so dearly! How they ran and told one another the glorious news!

Mary Magdalene saw Him first of all. She had come to the garden very early in the morning, with sweet spices, and had found that the tomb was empty. Quickly she ran into the town to tell the disciples about it. Then they ran back with her and found that it was true; but they could not yet believe that Jesus was alive again. It seemed to them too wonderful to be true; but how they missed the loving Jesus who was always so kind to them, and how they longed to see Him once more!

Soon they went back to talk to the other disciples, but they left Mary at the tomb; she felt she could not leave until she knew just where Jesus was. So she sat there sobbing with bitter grief. Then she thought

she would look into the empty tomb once again; and when she did so, she saw a wonderful sight. Two beautiful, shining angels were there, and they spoke to her and asked her kindly why she was crying. And Mary told them that someone had taken Jesus away, and she did not know where to find Him.

And then, boys and girls, another most wonderful thing happened to Mary. As she turned away from the tomb after speaking to the angels, there was a Man standing in front of her, and she thought He must be the gardener. He spoke to her so kindly, and seemed so sorry for her, that she asked Him to tell her where Jesus was, so that she could go and take Him away to another tomb. Then Mary looked up at the Stranger through her tears, and saw a loving face and eyes that were full of kindness and sympathy. And as she looked at Him, He said, "Mary." Just one little word, but Mary knew that sweet, tender voice, and it made her eyes sparkle with delight. Only one little word, but the poor weeping woman, when she heard it, sprang to Jesus' side with gladness and joy untold. Jesus, her loving Master and Friend, was alive again.

And you, little children, should be just as happy as Mary was on that beautiful morning long ago, because it was your Jesus who rose from the dead. After He had spoken kindly to many of His disciples and shown them the nail marks in His hands and His feet and the cruel wound the soldiers had made in His side, they knew it was really Jesus who was speaking to them. They were all filled with great joy and glad-

ness. Then Jesus told them to go to all the world and give the people the sweet gospel message that God loves them so much that He gave His only Son Jesus to die instead of them, that they might live forever in the beautiful home He was going to prepare for them.

A few days after this Jesus said a loving good-by to His disciples, and He went back to His beautiful home in heaven in a great cloud. While His disciples were watching the cloud fade away in the distant sky, two shining angels appeared and told them that Jesus would come back again someday in a bright cloud, just as they had seen Him go away.

Now I have told you about some wonderful things, I know; but I want you to remember that the greatest and the best day this world has ever seen was that beautiful morning when the angels came from heaven and rolled the stone away, and Jesus rose from the dead. For now we know that if we die, Jesus will wake us up when He comes back to this earth again, and He will take us to live with Him forever and ever in the sweet homeland of God. Don't you think that this is one of the "sweetest stories ever told"?

Yes, Jesus died and lives again;
No grave could hold your Lord and mine;
And soon He'll come on earth to reign
Forevermore, as King divine.
Then children, shout aloud and sing
Hosanna to your coming King.

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